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President: Mr. ADEKANYE (Nigeria)

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[*] GC(XXXVI)/1001.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document
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Abbreviations used in this record

ASSET	Analysis of Safety Significant Events Team
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EDF	Electricité de France
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
G-7	Group of Seven
G-24	Group of Twenty-Four (countries)
ICRP	International Commission on Radiological Protection
MOX	Mixed oxide
MW(e)	Megawatt (electrical)
NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency (of OECD)
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPANAL	Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
OSART	Operational Safety Review Team
R&D	Research and development
RBMK	High-power channel-type reactor (Soviet Union)
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SAGSI	Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation
TACF	Technical Assistance and Co-operation Fund
THORP	Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (British Nuclear Fuels Ltd.)
TW·h	Terawatt hours
WWER	Water-cooled and -moderated reactor

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE (resumed)

1. The PRESIDENT said that agreement had been reached in the Latin America Group on proposing the delegate of Ecuador for election as Vice-President of the General Conference and the delegate of Cuba for election as Additional Member of the General Committee. If there was no objection, he would propose that those delegates be elected. They would hold office until the close of the session.

2. It was so agreed.

GENERAL DEBATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1991 (resumed)

3. Mr. SELIN (United States of America) prefaced his statement by reading out the following message from the President of the United States - a message which, he said, underlined not only the unwavering support of the United States Government for the Agency and its role, but also the President's personal commitment to non-proliferation and nuclear safety worldwide.

"I am pleased to send greetings to all those who are gathered for the thirty-sixth General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"For decades, this organization has served as a leader in efforts to stem the spread of nuclear weapons and to encourage peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Recent events have underscored the vital importance of the IAEA: the Agency has effectively implemented United Nations Security Council resolutions for the destruction of Iraq's nuclear weapons programme. We know, of course, that continuing vigilance is essential.

"The world community has shown its strong support for the IAEA and for the principles on which it was founded as an increasing number of countries have joined the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, entered into full-scope safeguards agreements, and embraced a strengthened safeguards system. In an appropriate response to current challenges, the IAEA has also devoted increasing attention to problems of nuclear safety, especially in Eastern Europe.

"The United States stands firmly behind the IAEA. As you may know, I recently announced that, as part of our global non-proliferation initiative, the United States would work with other nations to strengthen the Agency, including necessary increases in the safeguards budget. We will also continue our support of the Agency's technical assistance programmes.

"The IAEA is a cornerstone of mutual efforts to promote peace and security in a changing world. The United States therefore calls on all Member States to join in supporting the Agency and its critical mission."

4. The nineties were seeing changes of a scale and rapidity which had scarcely any parallel in history. Because of those changes, leaders, governments and institutions worldwide had been, and were continuing to be, put to the test. During the Iraq crisis of 1991 the United Nations, of which the Agency was a part, had shown itself worthy of the trust placed in it at the time of its founding and had justified the hope that organizations representing the world community and embodying the values it shared could act with unity and decisiveness to compel adherence to the rule of law among nations.

5. The success achieved by the United Nations system in dealing with the complex problems of the world of the 1990s was a tribute to its institutional flexibility - a flexibility which derived in large measure from its willingness in past years to review its own programmes and policies dispassionately and make the course corrections necessary for meeting the changing demands of a changing world. Now the challenge for the Agency was to show comparable clear-sightedness and candour about its evolving responsibilities, so that in the coming decades it could build on the outstanding successes it had achieved during its first 35 years.

6. The Agency's international co-operation regime was a pillar of stability and security for the world community. The safeguards responsibilities entrusted to the Agency in 1957 had been considerably broadened by the opening of the NPT for signature in 1968, during the Cold War and the arms race. The Cold War and the arms race were now history and, thanks in no small measure to the Agency, the proliferation of nuclear weapons so feared two decades before had not occurred.

7. On the contrary, the principles of non-proliferation were being accepted more and more widely. The recent accession of France, the People's Republic of China and South Africa to the NPT, the conclusion of comprehensive safeguards agreements with South Africa and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the steps towards full-scope safeguards in Argentina and Brazil, and

the increasing likelihood that the Tlatelolco Treaty would enter into force for the whole of Latin America within the next year were developments which constituted an implicit endorsement both of the goal of non-proliferation and of the Agency's role in helping to achieve it. In addition, the technical assistance provided by the Agency in the course of more than three decades had done much to improve the quality of life throughout the world.

8. The experience with Iraq in 1991 had shown how effective the Agency's safeguards could be when given the full support of Member States. For the first time, a party to the NPT had been found to have violated its safeguards agreement with the Agency. In response to that, the Board of Governors had confirmed that the Agency had the authority to conduct special inspections wherever there were indications of undeclared nuclear materials or activities in a State which had concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement. Over the past 18 months, Agency teams had performed with distinction in implementing the provisions of United Nations Security Council resolution 687. In so doing, they had underlined the fact that the relationship with the Security Council envisaged in the Agency's Statute would be an important factor in the future.

9. However, it had to be acknowledged that the example of Iraq had demonstrated not only the strengths of the Agency's safeguards regime but also - as the Director General had made clear recently at Elsinore - the challenges faced by the Agency and its Member States. On that occasion he said:

"The lesson of Iraq is ... that more must be done to increase the risk of discovery of secret, non-declared activity. It is not practical or possible to send inspectors to roam the whole territory of States, searching in every nook and cranny for secret nuclear installations. Inspectors must have information about where they should look. In the case of Iraq, this information came from defectors and satellites. In the future, the IAEA will make use of many sources of information apart from the declarations of inspected States: from exporters, from the media, and from Member States. ... It may be hoped that the existence of strengthened verification and Security Council determination will deter any State so inclined from attempting to cheat."

10. The Iraqi example had shown that a safeguards system designed to detect diversions of nuclear materials from civilian uses should not be expected to detect a clandestine nuclear weapons programme which did not depend on

diverted material. Time and the steady increase in technical sophistication around the world had shifted the emphasis of the Agency's safeguards programme. Nevertheless, as the Director General had indicated, the events in Iraq were a valuable lesson as well as an opportunity. The Agency's safeguards system could and should be strengthened, use being made of the full range of information-gathering resources available. The Agency should continue to order its priorities so as to ensure that the safeguards regime effectively met the challenges of the coming decades.

11. It was ironic that, as the world community rejoiced that the Cold War had ended, awareness of the grave threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction had increased. The Parties to the NPT would have the opportunity to strengthen the non-proliferation regime when they met in 1995 to extend the Treaty. For almost 25 years, the NPT had been the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, serving as the principal legal barrier to the spread of nuclear weapons. No other treaty could match it for the number of signatories. His country believed that the NPT should be extended indefinitely and unconditionally in 1995.

12. On 13 July 1992, President Bush had announced a major initiative aimed at promoting international efforts to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction. In recognition of the Agency's place at the centre of those efforts, the President had vowed that the United States would collaborate with other countries in strengthening the Agency and would support the necessary increases in the safeguards budget. As part of that initiative the United States had announced that it would not produce plutonium or highly enriched uranium for nuclear explosive purposes. That step was intended to encourage countries in regions of tension such as the Middle East and South Asia to take similar steps and halt the production or acquisition of weapons usable materials.

13. A further area where circumstances had changed markedly since the establishment of the Agency was nuclear safety. Although the promotion of nuclear safety was among the Agency's primary functions, it had only recently become clear how vital a role the Agency had to play in offering a global framework for efforts to improve the safety of nuclear power facilities. As

nuclear technology had expanded steadily throughout the world, especially for the generation of electricity, the need for rigorous, well defined and consistently applied safety principles in all countries opting for nuclear energy had become increasingly apparent, not only to nuclear specialists but, also - and more importantly - to the public, the media and national legislatures.

14. Since the Chernobyl accident in 1986, the Agency had been playing a key role in addressing the safety problems of high-risk reactors of Soviet design. In the past three years, the Agency's comprehensive safety reviews of WWER-440/230 plants and its efforts to undertake similar reviews of RBMK plants had helped to reduce the danger of another catastrophe at a nuclear power plant. His country strongly supported the Agency's work in that regard.

15. Faced with the most imminent nuclear hazards in Eastern Europe, the Agency had performed its role admirably. Unfortunately, nations had not been as swift to respond as the situation demanded. In light of that experience, efforts were being made to ensure that, as requests for assistance were received from States of the former Soviet Union (where a generation of ill-designed reactors was being operated, each one a threat and in urgent need of corrective measures), the necessary assistance would be provided without delay.

16. Despite the difficulties encountered initially in providing assistance to Eastern Europe, the United States remained convinced that bilateral agreements were the best basis for the provision of large-scale assistance to the countries in question. Accordingly, in May 1992 at the Lisbon Conference on Assistance to New Independent States, Secretary of State Mr. Baker had announced a US \$25 million programme of nuclear safety assistance for the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The assistance would consist mainly of near-term measures relating - inter alia - to operational safety, the strengthening of regulatory authorities and technical improvements at existing reactors.

17. His delegation was gratified that a number of other countries, including Japan, Canada, Sweden and members of the European Community, had also announced plans for multi-million dollar safety assistance programmes.

Those initiatives had received further impetus at the July summit of the G-7 countries in Munich. Through the G-24 mechanism established to provide safety assistance to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, a co-ordinated programme, broadened to allow the new States of the former Soviet Union to benefit, was being implemented. The Agency's contribution in assessing the safety needs of the recipient countries and acting as a repository of information on assistance programmes would be essential to the success of those efforts.

18. As in the area of safeguards, the Agency's activities relating to Eastern Europe's reactors were a measure of the Agency's strength but also a potential source of weaknesses. Extremely important activities were having to be funded from extrabudgetary contributions. At a time when the Agency was being called upon to provide technical assistance in order to ensure nuclear safety worldwide, its resource requirements were growing. It was therefore important to transfer resources from lower- to higher-priority programmes and for Member States to ensure that the Agency had sufficient resources for implementing its highest-priority activities.

19. Apart from the immediate threat posed by the power reactors of the former Soviet bloc (a threat not to be underestimated), the existence of so many power plants of deficient design clearly illustrated the desirability of an international nuclear safety convention that would ensure at least minimum levels of safety at all plants, wherever they might be. The fact that fission products from a nuclear accident ignored national boundaries was not the only consideration; for nuclear power to be accepted by the public as a means of electricity generation, it had to be perceived - and perceived accurately - as a reasonably safe and environmentally sound form of energy.

20. The formulation of an international nuclear safety convention, however, raised the complex issue of how best to proceed in order to ensure acceptable safety levels when legal systems, technologies and industrial organization varied widely from one country to another. While it would be wrong to settle for a "lowest common denominator" approach, in trying to codify internationally binding obligations in the nuclear safety field one should not ignore such complexities. His country wished to see rapid progress towards an

instrument to which the great majority of countries using nuclear power for electricity production could accede, for, if only a few countries ultimately signed or ratified, the goal of achieving a broad consensus on what was needed in order to ensure safety would not have been attained.

21. A watershed had been reached in nuclear safeguards and nuclear safety, and also in the life of the Agency as an organization. The dramatic changes of recent years were a challenge to the world community and the Agency: seize the opportunity presented or risk being passed by irrevocably! His country's position was unequivocal. It had demonstrated its commitment in a number of important ways, especially by deciding not to produce plutonium or highly enriched uranium for explosive devices and by supporting the provision of increased funding for Agency safeguards.

22. For its part, the Agency should continue to re-examine its policies and priorities in the light of the new realities. He had mentioned earlier the re-evaluation which had been carried out in the late 1980s and which had played a large part in enabling the United Nations to respond flexibly and effectively to the Iraqi threat. That re-evaluation had not proceeded entirely from within - the United Nations, appreciating the need for a completely objective analysis, had wisely allowed a group of internationally recognized outside experts to conduct the necessary study.

23. As part of the current effort to develop a Medium-Term Plan, the Agency had also invited a group of distinguished experts to assess its needs and priorities; for that it was to be commended. The salutary process of self-analysis triggered by that group should continue and be expanded. The results could be invaluable in helping the Agency and its Member States to make wise decisions about the course which the Agency would follow as it entered the next century.

24. The Agency's Statute was sound and did not need to be revised. What was needed was a dispassionate appraisal of how the Agency could best fulfil its responsibilities under the Statute as it stood. The moment was right and should be seized. The circumstances were too propitious, and the potential consequences of inaction too grave, for the opportunity to be lost. In the coming decades, the world community would need, more than ever, an effective

and dynamic Agency with its attention and resources firmly focused on the areas of greatest need. With the support of its Member States, the Agency should be ready to meet the challenge, so that in 10, 20 or 30 years' time it would still be building on success.

25. Mr. HELLER ROUASSANT (Mexico) said that since the previous session of the General Conference significant events which opened up new prospects for the last decade of the 20th century had occurred in the area of non-proliferation. In particular, his country welcomed the steps taken to achieve the full entry into force of the Tlatelolco Treaty in the zone of application as specified in Article 4 of the Treaty. In that regard, he emphasized the amendments to Articles 14, 15, 16, 19 and 20 of the Treaty approved at the 7th Extraordinary Meeting of the General Conference of OPANAL on 26 August 1992.

26. Following proposals for amendments to the Tlatelolco Treaty from Argentina, Brazil and Chile in March 1992, Mexico, as depositary, had initiated consultations with those countries and the Agency. The consultations had resulted in the submission of the proposed amendments to the OPANAL General Conference. The approved amendments, which did not in any way alter the spirit of the Treaty, ensured that the obligations deriving from the Treaty would not hinder the acquisition or development of peaceful nuclear technology. They strengthened the Agency's role by giving it the power to carry out special inspections in accordance with Article 12 and the agreements referred to in Article 13 of the Treaty. Likewise, at the request of any of the Parties and in accordance with the procedures specified in Article 15 of the Treaty, the Council of OPANAL could submit for the Agency's consideration a request that the mechanisms necessary for carrying out a special inspection be set in motion.

27. His country welcomed the decision of Argentina, Brazil and Chile to take the steps necessary for bringing the Tlatelolco Treaty fully into effect as soon as possible for each of them and the fact that Cuba had reiterated its intention to accede to the Treaty once all other Latin American countries had become Parties.

28. Thirteen States had endorsed the amendments, which would have to be ratified, thereby opening the way to their entry into effect for all countries of the region. The only thing remaining was to invite those Caribbean States which had not acceded to the Treaty to take the necessary steps to do so. His country had reason for hoping that would happen during the months to come. A further very important event had been the ratification by France of Additional Protocol I to the Tlatelolco Treaty, which ensured that all the nuclear Powers would respect the region's denuclearized status. The strengthening of the regime established under the Tlatelolco Treaty, which was the product of genuine political will, proved - both for Latin Americans and for people living in other regions - that it was possible to rid oneself of the danger of nuclear weapons.

29. As the preamble to the Tlatelolco Treaty pointed out, militarily denuclearized zones were not an end in themselves, but rather a means for achieving general and complete disarmament under effective international control, as provided for in Article VI of the NPT. Every new accession to the NPT strengthened the universal non-proliferation regime, and his delegation accordingly welcomed the deposition by China and France of instruments of ratification of the Treaty, the speedy implementation of the safeguards agreement between South Africa and the Agency, the fact that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had fulfilled its obligation to conclude a full-scope safeguards agreement with the Agency and, finally, the imminent accession of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States.

30. Besides those signs of promise for the non-proliferation regime, the time was right to recall the other pillar of the NPT - the undertaking by all States party to the Treaty to facilitate the exchange of nuclear equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. His delegation shared the view of those States which had pointed to the necessity of strengthening the promotional provisions contained in Article IV of the NPT and Articles II and III.A of the Agency's Statute.

31. His Government, which was participating in the consultations among States party to the NPT on the establishment - during the 47th regular session of the United Nations General Assembly - of the Preparatory Committee for the Fifth NPT Review Conference, to be held in 1995, firmly believed that the Review Conference should not only examine all issues relating to the NPT, but also consider the question of extending the Treaty. The 1995 Conference would be an excellent opportunity to analyse the experience gained since the NPT entered into force and to adopt measures for establishing a genuinely universal non-proliferation regime. Thus, as part of the NPT review process it was essential to strengthen the exchange of nuclear equipment, material and technology for peaceful purposes with the help of the mechanisms developed by the Agency.

32. His country had always supported the strengthening of the Agency as the basis of a non-proliferation regime which both promoted and protected the free exchange of technology for peaceful purposes. Countries should not reserve for themselves, individually or collectively, discretionary powers regarding the transfer to other countries of dual-use material and high-technology equipment for use in the nuclear field. Their unilateral decisions could be extremely harmful to the transfer of technology if they were not based on Agency information or decisions concerning the nuclear activities of the recipient country. The time was right to recall that the NPT placed obligations not only on non-nuclear-weapon States but also on the nuclear Powers.

33. In the opinion of his Government, being a Party to the NPT implied a sincere commitment to the aims of the Treaty regarding safeguards and technical assistance and co-operation in the nuclear field. It was for the international community as a whole to prevent clandestine nuclear weapons programmes like that of Iraq. In that connection, his delegation acknowledged the role played by the Agency in Iraq pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions.

34. Mexico was continuing to use nuclear energy for the economic and social well-being of the country, in accordance with its obligations under the Agency's Statute. The first unit of the Laguna Verde nuclear power station, which accounted for over 4% of the electricity generated in Mexico, was still

being operated to high standards of reliability, safety and efficiency by the Federal Electricity Commission. The second unit, due to take on fuel towards the end of 1993, would contribute a similar amount to the national electricity supply when it went into service. The supply of annual fuel reloads under trilateral agreements between Mexico, the Agency and the United States of America was proceeding without problems.

35. Low- and medium-level waste was being stored temporarily, under the surveillance of the National Commission for Nuclear Safety and Safeguards, in a building constructed for the purpose inside the power station perimeter. In addition, the long-term spent fuel storage capacity of the ponds in the reactor buildings had been increased.

36. Mexico favoured increased Agency involvement in the transfer of technology and the provision of technical assistance for the management of waste from nuclear power plants (including exploitation of the uranium and plutonium in irradiated fuel) and waste resulting from radioisotope applications in agriculture, medicine, industry and scientific research.

37. Mexico supported the Agency initiatives aimed at strengthening international co-operation in nuclear safety and radiological protection and promoting the establishment of a universal nuclear safety regime with global harmonization as its ultimate objective. In particular, in accordance with the principle - which Mexico had always supported in all fora - that international law should be codified, his delegation saw the international nuclear safety convention as a useful instrument for setting international standards of conduct in an area of great importance for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In that connection, while acknowledging the valuable consultative role which the Agency could play, he reaffirmed his country's conviction that supreme responsibility and authority in nuclear safety matters rested with each State.

38. His country had made considerable progress regarding the various peaceful applications of nuclear energy in agriculture, medicine, industry and scientific research. In agriculture, Mexico was a leader in developing and applying sterile-insect techniques. Furthermore, its National Nuclear

Research Institute had acquired experience of food irradiation, and the private sector was interested in launching commercial-scale food irradiation projects.

39. With regard to nuclear applications in medicine, Mexico had also acquired some experience of using radiation therapy techniques. In nuclear medicine, radioisotope methods and techniques for diagnosing various illnesses of frequent occurrence in Mexico had been introduced. Mexico would like to see the Agency increase its technical assistance to developing countries wishing to step up and diversify their local production of radiopharmaceuticals, the demand for which was growing constantly as nuclear applications in medicine expanded.

40. During the 1991-92 biennium, Mexico was implementing - together with the Agency - 32 technical co-operation projects at seven national institutions. Ten of those projects had been funded from extrabudgetary resources provided by the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Spain. In 1991, Mexico had organized one interregional and three regional courses; 18 Mexicans had received fellowship training and five had benefited from scientific visits to various foreign institutions. Also, 56 specialists had taken part in training courses held under the auspices of the Agency. In both 1991 and 1992, Mexico had pledged and paid in full its calculated share of the TACF target.

41. For the 1993-94 biennial programme, his Government had submitted 19 requests for assistance and co-operation in projects involving a wide range of non-power applications of atomic energy. The envisaged project activities reflected the progress that Mexico had made in research and development and the establishment of regulations in the nuclear field, where it was among the most advanced countries of the region.

42. His delegation reaffirmed its support for the efforts to strengthen the Agency's safeguards system through the early provision of nuclear facility design information, on the understanding that the decision taken by the Board of Governors on 26 February 1992 could be revised if adherence to the time limits set for providing the information should prove difficult. In addition, Mexico had notified the Agency that it was able to provide the inspectors assigned to Mexico with multiple entry-exit visas valid for a year.

43. Mexico supported SAGSI in its task of examining the most promising ideas for reducing the costs of safeguards while maintaining their effectiveness. His delegation welcomed the Director General's intention to seek the advice of leading experts.

44. The liquidity crises which the Agency was undergoing because of delays in payments by certain contributors was a reason for particular concern. The precarious financial situation in which the Agency found itself had already had a detrimental impact on all areas of activity. Mexico called upon all Member States to give the matter serious consideration; fulfilment of the important functions and objectives set forth in Articles II and III.A of the Statute should not be hampered by financial obstacles.

45. His delegation had emphasized on several occasions that the financial crisis was not confined to the Regular Budget but also affected the budget for technical co-operation financed from voluntary contributions. Mexico's Resident Representative to the Agency had chaired an informal working group which had held consultations with Member States, pursuant to resolution GC(XXXV)/RES/562, on the financing of technical assistance. The report on the outcome of those consultations had been transmitted to the General Conference. As the report confirmed, there were widely differing opinions as to the best way of ensuring the payment of contributions. It was clear, however, that a further decline in contributions could not and should not be accepted.

46. His delegation wished to reaffirm Mexico's unwavering commitment to the Agency. It was convinced that, with a sound Agency backed by the confidence and financial support of its Member States, peaceful nuclear applications, horizontal and vertical non-proliferation and nuclear safety could be strengthened.

47. Mr. EGGAR (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, thanked the Agency for the role it had played over the past year, which had been one of intense activity. The year ahead was likely to be no less important.

48. The Community and its member States congratulated the Agency on the important contribution it had made to international efforts to uncover and render harmless Iraq's weapons of mass destruction pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 687. The announcement by the Security Council on 31 January 1992 that it would take appropriate measures in any further cases of non-compliance with NPT obligations reported by the Agency was an important new element in the overall non-proliferation regime.

49. Despite Iraq's persistent efforts to deceive and obstruct them, the inspection teams had exposed incontrovertible evidence that Iraq had been engaged in a complex and comprehensive nuclear weapons development programme and had destroyed key components of that programme. Doubts remained concerning the full extent of the programme, however, and it was essential that the international community maintain concerted pressure on Iraq, in order to force it to comply with all relevant United Nations resolutions and thereby ensure that it was never again in a position to threaten its neighbours. The Agency would continue to play an important role in that process.

50. In that context, the Community and its member States applauded the progress made by the Agency over the previous 12 months in its efforts to improve and strengthen its safeguards system in the light of recent experience. Effective assurance that nuclear energy would not be misused was essential to the peaceful nuclear development which it was the Agency's task to promote.

51. The past year had also seen a number of more welcome developments which had strengthened the non-proliferation regime. China and France had acceded to the NPT, so that all the nuclear-weapon States and all the members of the European Community were now Parties.

52. The Community and its member States welcomed the progress towards nuclear non-proliferation in Latin America, especially the conclusion of a full-scope safeguards agreement between Argentina, Brazil and the Agency. They were following the implementation of that agreement - and other developments in Latin America - with sympathy and interest, as they were the progress made in implementing the full-scope safeguards agreement which the Government of South Africa had concluded the previous year. They also

welcomed the ratification by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its safeguards agreement with the Agency; they looked forward to its speedy and complete implementation and would continue to follow progress closely. Equally, they looked forward to full implementation of the agreement between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsular and a bilateral system of inspection.

53. The Agency's safeguards played a crucial role within the framework of the NPT. As the Statute showed, the application of safeguards was one of the Agency's basic functions. The Community and its member States had long attached the highest priority to improving and strengthening the whole safeguards system.

54. At the previous General Conference session, the Twelve had proposed, in their joint statement, a programme for strengthening and improving the Agency's safeguards system. They were pleased that their ideas had helped to shape the discussions. They welcomed in particular the Board's reaffirmation of the Agency's right to conduct special inspections. They were working out how best to respond to the Director General's request that Agency Member States support the work of the Department of Safeguards by voluntarily providing additional information on the production of concentrates, on inventories of nuclear material and on international transfers of sensitive equipment. They hoped to have arrangements in place by the end of the year.

55. The task of strengthening the Agency's safeguards was not, however, finished. The fundamental study of possible alternative safeguards regimes which the Secretariat had begun should be continued, and it should draw on the best available technical advice. The Community and its member States also intended to play an active role in the preparations for the 1995 NPT Extension Conference with a view to contributing to international nuclear co-operation for peaceful purposes in the framework of a strengthened non-proliferation regime.

56. In the same context, the Community and its member States attached great importance to the agreement between the Director General and Commissioner Cardoso e Cunha on a new partnership between the CEC and the Agency's Department of Safeguards. The case for rationalizing the work of the two

safeguards bodies was clear. The new partnership arrangement would provide an excellent opportunity not only to secure full implementation of the agreement set forth in document INFCIRC/193 in a manner which respected the responsibilities of both parties, but also to redirect resources to areas where safeguards could make the greatest contribution to non-proliferation.

57. The Community and its member States also paid a tribute to the work of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which had resumed its activities and reached agreement on a new regime for controlling the export of nuclear-related dual-use items. That should permit the continued development of peaceful nuclear trade on the basis of transparent non-proliferation criteria. The Community and its member States also noted with satisfaction that all members of the Group had stated that they would make nuclear supplies subject to the application of full-scope safeguards; it was to be hoped that other suppliers would follow suit without delay.

58. Without safeguards, no one could promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. However, the Agency had a number of other, more directly promotional functions. The Community and its member States welcomed what had been achieved in the past year. The Agency's annual report gave many examples of work done in developing non-power uses of nuclear energy and thereby in helping to raise standards of living worldwide. The Agency was also to be commended for its continuing efforts in providing technical assistance. Despite difficult economic circumstances members of the Community were continuing to contribute according to their means.

59. The Parties to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material would be meeting in Vienna the following week to review the Convention. The Twelve intended to express their overall satisfaction with the way the Convention was functioning.

60. With regard to nuclear safety, the Community and its member States noted with satisfaction that agreement had been reached on the formulation of safety fundamentals, which would constitute a basic document. The Agency's review teams had also made a practical contribution to the enhancement of nuclear safety worldwide. The increasing number of requests for OSART and ASSET missions was the clearest evidence of their value.

61. At the previous session of the General Conference, the Community and its member States had welcomed the start of a step-by-step process for establishing an international nuclear safety regime. As initiators of the International Conference on the Safety of Nuclear Power held in Vienna in September 1991, they continued to be strongly in favour of the conclusion of a nuclear safety convention, believing that such an instrument would help greatly to raise the general level of nuclear safety worldwide and promote a harmonized international approach to all aspects of nuclear safety. They were pleased to note that a group of experts had started work on the preparation of such a convention and hoped that the experts' activities would be completed soon. They were committed to playing a positive role in the negotiation of the convention and in the continuing discussions - on the basis of current international nuclear safety experience - of the means of implementing it.

62. The Community and its member States also recognized the Agency's contribution in helping - for example, through OSART and ASSET missions - the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to improve nuclear safety. Furthermore, they wished to underline the importance of the Agency's extrabudgetary programme on WWER-440/230 reactors and the results it had produced to date. They wished to continue their close co-operation with the Agency in the development of its technical assistance programmes in that area. Similarly, they supported the call by the Group of 7 at its July summit in Munich for the international community to contribute to the financing of an urgent programme aimed at improving the safety of nuclear facilities in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. However, the problem was so large and complex, and those trying to provide assistance so numerous, that effective co-ordination was essential in order to set priorities and avoid duplication of effort. For that reason, the members of the Group of 24 had decided to improve the co-ordination of their efforts. In so doing, the Group would continue to rely on the Agency's advice.

63. The European Energy Charter, which had been signed at The Hague since the last session of the General Conference, encouraged the liberalization of trade and investment in the energy sector and also the achievement and maintenance of a high level of nuclear safety and effective co-operation in the nuclear safety field. Further work had since taken place to develop more

detailed provisions, and the Community and its member States hoped that the Charter's Basic Agreement and its Protocol on principles governing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the safety of nuclear installations would be concluded soon. They were grateful to the Agency for the help which it had given in connection with the negotiation of the Protocol.

64. The Agency's budget and general financial situation remained causes of great concern to the Community and its member States. The Agency could not function properly unless all Member States paid their assessed contributions in full and on time. It was therefore important that all Member States concerned remedy the situation as a matter of urgency. The Agency, for its part, should reduce its costs as much as possible and display realism.

65. Speaking as delegate of the United Kingdom, he said his country welcomed the progress made the previous week in developing mechanisms for the co-ordination of Western assistance in nuclear safety to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Co-ordination was not an end in itself; nor was it sufficient to carry out more studies. It was therefore important that the various bilateral and multilateral programmes of assistance move beyond the study phase and that practical help be given promptly, so that real improvements could be made to the operational safety of the plants in question. To that end, all donors needed to co-operate closely with the recipient countries. Everyone needed to demonstrate a genuine commitment to safety by taking action. He hoped that the European Community would do so by identifying specific projects for early implementation. The United Kingdom would continue to play its part in the process.

66. The energy market in the United Kingdom was continuing to evolve following the recent privatization of the electricity supply industry. One of the main objectives of privatization was to introduce competition into the electricity market. Competition was already beginning to take effect, and it was expected to intensify during the next few years.

67. His Government saw two main advantages in the continued use of nuclear power. First, it increased the range of available fuels, thereby improving security of supply. Second, by replacing fossil fuels it made a valuable contribution to efforts to reduce atmospheric pollution. His Government

therefore intended to continue with the nuclear power option, provided nuclear power became economic and the nuclear industry demonstrated that it was capable of maintaining its high standards of safety and environmental protection.

68. It was clear that the main challenge facing the British nuclear industry was to become competitive. The review of the prospects for nuclear power to be undertaken in the United Kingdom in 1994 would thus focus on the central issue of the economic viability of the nuclear power generation in a free and open energy market. The nuclear power generating companies in the United Kingdom were striving to lower their costs while maintaining their excellent safety records. In 1991-92, output from both the Magnox and the advanced gas-cooled reactors had reached record levels, and those reactors were currently meeting around 20% of the country's electricity needs. Total output had risen from 45 TWh in 1990-91 to 48.4 TWh in 1991-92.

69. Public concern about the environmental effects of burning fossil fuels also had implications for nuclear power. Economic nuclear power could make a significant contribution to attempts to reduce emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide. However, that depended on nuclear power remaining environmentally acceptable and on the current high safety standards being maintained. Public perceptions of safety would continue to be shaped by events around the world.

70. The British nuclear industry was pressing ahead with the construction of its first pressurized-water reactor, at Sizewell. Work was eight months ahead of schedule, and the station was due to begin commercial operations in 1994. The United Kingdom was continuing to make progress in the search for a solution to the problem of the long-term disposal of intermediate-level radioactive waste. In June, the waste management company UK Nirex had announced that it would defer by one year its decision on whether to apply for planning permission to construct a deep repository at Sellafield as the drilling of some deep boreholes had been delayed. Information from the test drilling was important to the establishment of a complete and satisfactory safety case for the proposed repository. UK Nirex hoped to be in a

position to submit a repository planning application towards the end of 1993. Obviously, it was essential to get the design right, even at the cost of some delay.

71. The new reprocessing plant at Sellafield (THORP) had been completed on schedule, in February 1992. It had received a favourable opinion from the European Commission under the relevant provision of the EURATOM Treaty. The plant was due to commence full-scale commercial operations early in 1993. It already had orders worth some 9 billion pounds sterling.

72. Research and development had demonstrated its value in solving the technical problems associated with reactor operation and safety, which had to be the responsibility primarily of operators and vendors as it was they who were best placed to set priorities and ensure value for money. In addition, research and development could provide governments and regulatory bodies with valuable information about more effective ways of discharging their respective responsibilities. His Government's aim was that the nuclear industry, which was now a mature industry, should operate according to commercial principles and justify research and development by reference to commercial considerations. The true economics of nuclear power could be assessed only if the research and development costs were also properly taken into account.

73. Mr. TAN (Malaysia) said that, like most international organizations, the Agency was not insulated from the present profound changes and socio-economic and political turmoil. Indeed, it was now more than ever inextricably involved in the search for and maintenance of world peace and security. It was therefore imperative that the Agency maintain an objective balance between its regulatory and promotional activities. Malaysia had high expectations that further progress would be made in those two areas, pursuant to NPT and as a result of the present discussions on the strengthening of Agency safeguards.

74. His country believed that proper and timely inspections carried out in accordance with comprehensive safeguards agreements were very important in order to thwart efforts to use facilities, equipment and materials in a manner detrimental to world peace and security. Hence, Malaysia reaffirmed its support for measures to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the

safeguards system, provided that the sovereign rights of the Member States concerned were taken into account. Also, it considered that careful deliberations on the proposal for a global nuclear safety and liability convention were absolutely essential in order to clearly define the responsibilities of the operators of nuclear facilities and to take full account of global environmental rights and interests.

75. Developing countries regarded the Agency's technical co-operation programmes as one means of effectively transferring nuclear know-how. Those programmes had helped his country to build up its energy and nuclear power planning capabilities and to apply nuclear technology in non-power sectors, and Malaysia was therefore concerned about the recent decline in financing for them. Urgent measures to improve the situation should be considered.

76. That having been said, he wished to place on record his delegation's appreciation of the Agency's contribution to the development of nuclear science and technology in Malaysia. Also, he thanked the Secretariat for its untiring efforts in promoting development in Asia and the Pacific through the Regional Co-operative Agreement (RCA), which had recently been extended until 1997, and in encouraging beneficial bilateral arrangements with developed countries in the region such as Australia and Japan. He hoped that those arrangements would be further reinforced and improved.

77. Having benefited from the Agency's programmes, his country stood ready to continue co-operating with the Agency, and he was pleased to announce that in 1993 it would be making a further modest contribution (\$66 600) to the TACF; that was in addition to an offer of fellowships for scientists from other developing countries to be trained in non-power areas of nuclear science at relevant Malaysian institutions. In that connection, Malaysia wished to encourage the establishment of networking arrangements between its nuclear science and research institutions and counterparts in developed and other developing countries.

78. In conclusion, he said that the joint commitment to protect the environment required a global approach and partnership in order that there should be continuing support for economic growth and the creation of conditions conducive to sustainable development. He hoped that the dialogue

between developing and developed countries, which had begun well before the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, would eventually help resolve some of the complex problems relating to the environment and sustainable development. If not, the present economic disarray and political inequality would mean that the laudable international efforts initiated before the Earth Summit and the hope placed in the international community subsequently had been in vain. The Agency's programmes would undoubtedly be an integral part of that process.

79. Mr. AL-SULEIMAN (Saudi Arabia) said that in fulfilment of its statutory obligations the Agency should promote efforts to achieve and maintain a high level of radiation protection and nuclear safety throughout the world. Radioactive waste management remained one of the critical issues hampering the expansion of nuclear energy applications. All States using nuclear energy in any form accumulated radioactive waste that had to be disposed of properly. The Agency should therefore promote appropriate technologies for radioactive waste management - especially low- and medium-level waste management technologies which took into account various aspects of radiation protection, nuclear safety and siting as well as environmental factors. The Agency should also pursue its advisory activities with a view to helping developing Member States to plan integrated systems for the disposal of radioactive waste.

80. The efficiency and effectiveness of the safeguards system remained a major concern of the Agency and Member States, as safeguards strengthened confidence that transferred nuclear technology was being used exclusively for peaceful purposes. His delegation felt that realism was essential in planning and implementation as the grave monetary crisis faced by the Agency in 1992 would have an adverse impact on the effectiveness of safeguards activities. Further consultations between the Secretariat and Member States would lead to increased confidence in the Agency's safeguards system and help to strengthen and improve the system, which should not, however, be done at the expense of technical co-operation.

81. In resolution GC(XXXIII)/RES/515 the General Conference had requested the Director General "to assess the technical and economic potential for using nuclear heat reactors in sea water desalination in the light of relevant

experience gained during the past decade". In resolution GC(XXXIV)/RES/540 the General Conference had further requested the Director General to assess in detail "the costs of potable water production with various sizes of nuclear desalination plant" and "to include nuclear desalination as one of the activities in future programmes of the Agency".

82. The Middle East, one of the most volatile and tense regions of the world, was facing a severe shortage of water, and so the provision of water for households, industry and agriculture was receiving the highest priority. Saudi Arabia and the member States of the Gulf Co-operation Council were among the first countries to meet their fresh water requirements through the desalination of sea water using fossil fuels. The use of nuclear energy for desalination was technically effective and could be economically competitive. His delegation felt that the Agency should continue to support the development of the necessary technology.

83. Commending the Agency on the achievements of the two-year programming cycle, he emphasized that technical co-operation was among the Agency's most important activities and stressed the need to provide assured and predictable financing for it - namely, from the Regular Budget.

84. Resolution GC(XXXV)/RES/571, entitled "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East", had been adopted by consensus with the aim of underlining that the peace and security of the Middle East depended on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon free zone in the region. The Arab countries had been the first to support that resolution in the belief that Agency safeguards would be applied to all nuclear activities in the Middle East without exception or reservation. The achievement of stability in the Middle East required balanced controls and the application of safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region. Saudi Arabia supported efforts aimed at establishing a nuclear-weapon free zone in the Middle East and reiterated that nuclear disarmament should apply to all States in the region without exception. Also, it supported the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

85. In resolution GC(XXXV)/RES/561 the General Conference had requested the Informal Working Group on the Financing of Safeguards "to continue its work so that consensus may be reached on the arrangements for the future financing of safeguards and to report, through the Board of Governors, to the Conference at its thirty-sixth regular session". His delegation appreciated the efforts of the Chairman of the Informal Working Group and the recommendations made. It would like not only Member States' national incomes to be taken into account in the computing of budgetary contributions, but also the number of nuclear installations in each State and the State's capacity to manage and operate them.

86. In view of the importance of food irradiation for developing countries, his delegation hoped that the Agency would devise and implement programmes in that area and disseminate relevant research results and that it would provide developing countries with assistance in reducing food losses, improving food production and expanding their trade in irradiated foodstuffs.

87. Saudi Arabia was not party either to the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage or to the Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy. However, his delegation had followed with great interest the meetings of the Standing Committee on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage. It had noted the divergent views expressed by members of the Committee on various topics, especially the financial involvement of the State in compensating for nuclear damage in excess of the operator's liability and the submission of military installations to the provisions of the conventions. Some States with nuclear installations were calling on States with no such installations to help meet the costs of compensation payments. His delegation felt that the States which had built nuclear installations should assume responsibility for such costs.

88. Mr. TSOUNIS (Greece), while fully associating himself with the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Community, wanted to make a few additional remarks. His Government was grateful to the Director General and his staff for the work done during the past year and endorsed the Agency's Annual Report for 1991. The Agency had made tremendous efforts since its creation in helping to harness atomic

energy for peace and prosperity, in spite of financial difficulties which had greatly hampered its operations during recent years. Sometimes those efforts had met with success, but not always.

89. A new era was now beginning for the Agency. The unprecedented changes in the world today made careful examination - and possible expansion - of the Agency's role necessary in order to meet the new needs of Member States. Over the past 35 years, the Agency had shown that it was efficient. It had managed, sometimes despite great difficulties, to perform its duties successfully with limited financial resources. Thus there was good reason to hope that the new challenges would also be dealt with in a cost-effective manner. To that end, certain administrative and structural reforms were necessary. His delegation urged the Director General to study the matter with a view to ensuring greater efficiency and effectiveness and to report to the General Conference at its next session.

90. Greece both provided and received technical assistance through the Agency. A number of individuals from developing countries had been trained at Greek scientific establishments. At the same time, substantial assistance had been provided to various Greek institutions. The Agency was providing assistance to developing countries especially in non-power uses of nuclear energy. Through its technical co-operation programme the Agency was trying to provide tools for solving problems related to health, nutrition, water supplies, agricultural development, animal husbandry, soil fertility, and so on.

91. The Agency's increased functions in the area of safety had unfortunately coincided with major cuts in its budget and the establishment of a policy of zero real growth. Those important functions had been pursued vigorously with the help of extrabudgetary resources. Greece was still closely following the Agency's activities relating to WWER-440/230 reactors, especially those at Kozloduy, and expected that the results of those activities would provide a basis for developing programmes designed to enhance the safety of those reactors. The G 24 countries were relying on the Agency's advice, and major efforts were being made to help countries in Eastern and Central Europe, including Bulgaria and the new democracies of the former

Soviet Union, to raise safety levels at their nuclear power plants. While supporting progress through the use of nuclear energy, his country was acutely aware of the great risks involved in operating nuclear plants which did not meet the Agency's safety standards.

92. His Government noted with satisfaction the co-operation between the Agency and the CEC and NEA in providing technical and financial support to East European countries in the field of nuclear safety. In that context, the Greek Atomic Energy Commission, in co-operation with the CEC, was organizing a training seminar on emergency planning and response in the event of a nuclear accident for Bulgarian and Greek participants; the seminar was to be held in Athens in October 1992.

93. Greece had been an active member of the working group negotiating a nuclear safety convention on the basis of a Secretariat draft. It supported the conclusion of such a convention, which was expected to contain internationally harmonized minimum safety standards and to enhance the role of the Agency. The convention should cover all parts of the fuel cycle, including radioactive waste.

94. Greece had been one of the first countries to accede to the NPT and, despite certain unfortunate recent events, it remained firmly convinced that the Treaty was the only instrument which could ensure a stable and safe world. It was true that the NPT and the corresponding safeguards regime had been negotiated at a time when the world had been a very different place. The end of the Cold War and the new geopolitical environment had led to new thinking and lent new dimensions to the issues of non-proliferation. However, the NPT was still the only hope. Despite what some people might think about its imperfections, the Treaty was the most widely accepted agreement in the field of arms control and disarmament, and Greece felt that its continuation must be ensured.

95. A number of important steps had been taken since the previous session of the General Conference. The recent accession of France and China to the NPT was much appreciated. In addition, South Africa's co-operation with the Agency in the implementation of its NPT safeguards agreement and the steps taken by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to assist

the Agency in performing its safeguards functions were encouraging. Regarding South Africa, his Government was satisfied with the inventory report on the country's nuclear material and installations and with the report's general conclusion - that no evidence had been found that South Africa's initial report had been incomplete. As to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, his Government looked forward to full co-operation with the Agency in the safeguards area and to full implementation of the bilateral agreement between the two Koreas on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the establishment of a common inspection system.

96. The Brazilian-Argentine agreement had set a good precedent and contributed to confidence building at the regional level. The Tlatelolco Treaty, on which that agreement was based, and the Treaty of Rarotonga were good examples of the regional non-proliferation approach. As his delegation had stated the previous year, non-proliferation objectives were served by regional approaches. Progress in the Middle East, with the opening of peace negotiations among the interested countries, raised the hope of progress as regards nuclear issues.

97. His delegation endorsed document GC(XXXVI)/1019, particularly paragraph 8. It shared the view that the Director General should make every effort, together with Member States of the region, to find a positive solution. Although safeguards seminars might be useful, only political will could ultimately lead to a political commitment in the form of a regional treaty. His delegation also shared the view that a model safeguards agreement should be drafted once the obligations to be included in such a treaty had been clarified.

98. There was no doubt that the Agency had done its utmost to carry out the tasks entrusted to it in Security Council resolutions 687, 707 and 715. The Director General had handled that sensitive matter skilfully and had reported, as requested, through the Secretary-General to the Security Council. Thus far, 14 inspection missions had taken place and Iraq's secret nuclear programme had been uncovered. Its size and sophistication had surprised the world community. Iraq's non-compliance with the NPT and its safeguards obligations and its non-compliance with the Security Council resolutions were

regrettable. His delegation urged Iraq to stop withholding information which should be communicated without delay to the Agency's inspectors in accordance with the provisions of the Security Council resolutions. If Iraq wished to prove its peaceful intentions, it should review its policies and co-operate more closely with the Agency. His delegation congratulated the Agency's inspection teams on their efforts not only in uncovering Iraq's clandestine facilities but also in rendering harmless Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

99. That isolated, but unfortunate, precedent had given real impetus to a process aimed at strengthening Agency safeguards by improving the present system and taking necessary new measures. The Board of Governors had already made good progress in that direction. The Agency's right to conduct special inspections had been reaffirmed by the Board and already invoked in some isolated cases.

100. The time had come for the Agency to consider alternative safeguards approaches with a view to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system, which needed strengthening if unpleasant surprises were to be avoided in the future. The strengthened safeguards system should have an "early warning" capability for detecting anomalies in a timely manner. The technical elements of a modified safeguards system should be such that the system fully met the political objective: to give assurance of the peaceful nature of the nuclear activities of any State and to deter diversion.

101. It seemed, however, that at the present time there was very little prospect of substantially increasing the funds available to the Agency. The safeguards system should therefore be made as cost-effective as possible, and extrabudgetary funds should be provided for that purpose. That was, at present, the only realistic way of strengthening safeguards. The basic study initiated by the Secretariat should continue. His delegation suggested, as it had done the previous year, that a small group of experts be created for that purpose. The group could be an expanded version of SAGSI, as had been proposed by the Director General.

102. Greece had already agreed to the new regime for controlling the export of nuclear-related dual-use items and to the adoption of a policy of full-scope safeguards as a condition of nuclear supply. He called on all States to

do the same. Also, his country had welcomed the Director General's suggestion regarding the voluntary reporting of nuclear material and was in the process of considering it. He believed that the dissemination of peaceful uses of nuclear energy on the one hand and safeguards commitments on the other were mutually reinforcing; the Agency's safeguards system could be regarded as a means of facilitating the transfer of peaceful nuclear technology.

103. Greece attached great importance to environmental matters, and his delegation had noted with appreciation the report resulting from the Agency's participation in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development contained in document GC(XXXVI)/INF/310. It had also noted that several of the "Agenda 21" programme chapters on conservation and the management of resources for development were relevant to the Agency.

104. In conclusion, his delegation once again congratulated the Director General and the Secretariat on the excellent work done during the period under consideration. His Government recognized both the importance of the Agency's promotional role and the contribution which the Agency made to peace and security by giving its Member States confidence that nuclear energy was and would continue to be used for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind.

105. Mr. ROUVILLOIS (France) said that the past year had been a particularly eventful one in the nuclear field, with developments relating to the international non-proliferation regime, to disarmament and the fate of the resulting fissile material, and to safety.

106. Major progress had been made with regard to non-proliferation. The accession to the NPT of the Baltic States and Slovenia, followed by China and France, had given a vital boost to the Treaty just when preparations were about to get under way for the 1995 Review Conference. The accession of all the CIS Republics, particularly Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, was now eagerly awaited. France, like other countries, intended to pronounce itself in favour of an indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995; it was to be hoped that as many as possible of the States party to the Treaty would do the same. There had also been important progress as regards the Tlatelolco Treaty; on 24 August 1992, France had deposited its instrument of ratification of Additional Protocol I, as promised by President Mitterrand in the Security Council in January 1992.

107. The cohesion of the nuclear supplier countries had increased appreciably, the 27 countries which adhered to the London Guidelines deciding to adopt the principle of comprehensive safeguards as a condition of export; that represented a very significant strengthening of non-proliferation policy. In addition, they had updated the existing lists of nuclear materials and technologies and had adopted a specific regime for potentially dual-use items.

108. In February 1992, new measures had been adopted within the Agency with a view to increasing the effectiveness of international safeguards and ensuring that they were really applied to all materials and facilities which States had undertaken to use for peaceful purposes. The decisions in question, which involved the Agency's credibility, had been expected. Grounds for concern persisted, however, since some countries, such as India, Pakistan and Israel, were still opposed to the Agency's applying safeguards to all their nuclear facilities and some others were suspected of not complying with their obligations. France welcomed the fact that the Agency had destroyed a number of clandestine facilities in Iraq. However, Iraq was still withholding from the Agency certain information which it was required to provide under the terms of Security Council resolution 687 and it was sometimes obstructing the inspectors in their work. There was no way of knowing for sure at the present stage whether the Iraqi programme was known in its entirety. He hoped that the post-destruction monitoring plan would be implemented in accordance with Security Council resolution 715, without prejudice to any inspections which might still be necessary.

109. Thus, there was greater cohesion among the main suppliers, more stringent export control measures had been adopted, international safeguards were being reviewed and the number of States participating in the non proliferation regime had increased. However, new problems were arising: the break-up of the Soviet empire; the delicate situation created by dual-use technologies; and the difficulty of uncovering even large-scale clandestine programmes.

110. In the past year the two Superpowers had made great progress with regard to nuclear disarmament. However, the acceleration of the disarmament process was associated with new problems - regarding the fate of the fissile

material contained in the nuclear weapons. The importance of those problems had quickly been appreciated, but solutions were hard to find and even harder to implement. Numerous discussions had taken place on the matter, notably in Washington in July 1992.

111. In the immediate future and for several years to come, storage of the fissile material was the only realistic solution, but there was no indication that permanent storage was envisaged. Recycling of the nuclear material from the former Soviet Union's weapons in civil reactors was planned, but there was controversy about the timing and the general approach. Conversion of the highly enriched uranium into fuel for commercial reactors would offer substantial advantages, from the point of view both of non-proliferation and of safety. The plutonium - which was attracting even more public attention because of its properties - posed an extremely delicate problem. In theory there were two solutions: storage or recycling. One idea that had been put forward was to burn the plutonium in a "de breeder" (a breeder operated in such a way as to consume more plutonium than it produced) or to recycle it in MOX fuel. France was prepared to become actively involved in exploring the various approaches.

112. Important developments had also taken place in nuclear safety. In September 1991 leading world experts had concluded that an international initiative was needed and, at its thirty fifth session, the General Conference had adopted a resolution recognizing the need to promote safety within the framework of a concerted international effort; the idea of a safety convention had been born. The idea had since taken on a clearer shape, and a decisive stage should be reached in October 1992. The international nuclear community now knew that safety was a global issue, for the consequences of a nuclear accident extended beyond frontiers and safety matters played a major part in the acceptance of nuclear power by the general public. That was particularly true in Western and Eastern Europe.

113. There had been no major accident since Chernobyl, but the incidents which had occurred - for example, in Bulgaria and near St. Petersburg - were a reminder for all Europeans of the problems associated with certain reactor types of Soviet design. Assessments had been made of the difficulties

involved in dealing with those problems effectively and swiftly. There were approximately 25 first-generation reactors of the RBMK and WWER types with design, maintenance and operating problems that the countries directly concerned could not easily solve by themselves. Most of those reactors would have to remain in service for several years to come in order to provide essential energy for those countries. Partial recourse to electricity from Western Europe could in time be facilitated by interconnecting the grids, and significant reductions in consumption could result from energy saving and the charging of normal prices for electricity. In the meantime, however, it was vital that action be taken and, although there was acute international awareness of the situation, the elaboration of a concerted plan by the various parties interested in helping was taking a great deal of time. The situation had been referred to by the industrialized countries (the G-7) in 1991 at their London Summit, and in July 1992 - at their Munich Summit - the G-7 had offered the States directly concerned support within the framework of a multilateral action programme aimed at supplementing the bilateral assistance already being provided. However, the will to act had not yet been fully translated into action, and it was high time that practical decisions were taken.

114. In France too, the past year had seen events with international repercussions in the nuclear field. The inauguration of the new reprocessing facility at La Hague had been an occasion for celebrating a major technological and industrial success, achieved in response to France's concern about ensuring responsible management of the nuclear material cycle and not leaving the problem for future generations to deal with. The facility had gone into operation on schedule and was functioning most satisfactorily; full-capacity operation should be reached in two years' time. With the processes being applied there, it was possible to reduce the radiological exposure of the staff, which was now on average about one thousandth of the ICRP's recommended limits. The example of La Hague showed that nuclear energy could be controlled throughout its industrial cycle and that it was considerate towards mankind and the environment. That should be publicized and explained in order to boost public confidence.

115. In July 1992, the French Government had decided to postpone the restart of Superphénix. That in no way implied that the project had been abandoned. On the contrary, thought was being given to the role which it might play, once all the safety requirements laid down by the public authorities had been met, in studies and experiments relating to the consumption of plutonium and the incineration of long-lived waste. The current year had also seen Electricité de France deciding to order a new 1400 MW reactor, due to start up in 1999. Conscious of their responsibilities, the authorities were constantly endeavouring to improve the performance of facilities and to support the French research effort; as regards the back end of the fuel cycle, the aim was to reduce both the quantity and the harmfulness of the waste. A more thorough separation of long-lived radioisotopes, which could then be destroyed in reactors or accelerators, was a major objective, and for research in that area a new laboratory - ATALANTE - was about to go into service in France.

116. The back-end of the fuel cycle - namely the management and final storage of the waste - was a particularly sensitive issue justifiably arousing the concern of the general public, which did not want to leave a "poisoned legacy" to future generations. The proposed technical solutions had to be infallible, and they should be explained fully and repeatedly. Ever since the inception of its nuclear programme, France had been determined that the resulting waste should be managed and stored within its own territory. In 1990 and 1991, the issue of high-level or long-lived radioactive waste storage had aroused concern in the population; the French Government had decided to respond by introducing more formal consultation procedures. That was the purpose of a bill passed in December 1991 which provided for more thorough research into the various ways of eliminating waste, and particularly the separation and transmutation of long-lived elements. Every year a report on the status of that research would be examined by Parliament and published. At the same time, decisions on the building of underground laboratories to investigate the burial of such waste in deep geological strata would be taken in consultation with the local populations and their elected representatives.

117. With regard to low- and intermediate level waste, the first French repository, which had been in service for some 30 years, was reaching saturation and would finally cease operating in 1994. A new facility, the

Centre de L'Aube, had started operations in January 1992. During construction, special efforts had been made to keep the local population informed; those efforts had paid off, the facility going into service under conditions that were excellent from both a technical and a psychological point of view.

118. Because of recent events, the Agency was faced with new problems, to which it had started to respond with effectiveness and a high level of competence. It was now making vital contributions to international initiatives in the key areas of safety, non-proliferation and nuclear power promotion. France would continue to lend firm support.

119. Mr. WAGNER (Czechoslovakia) said that the changes in Europe and other parts of the world had increased the Agency's workload. The old world order seemed to be past, and efforts were being made to replace it by a system which responded better to the vital interests of the world's population. Unfortunately, some people might be tempted by the prospect of owning, or of having independent access to, nuclear weapons. That was why his delegation considered that the Agency's role in non-proliferation was vital and that its non-proliferation activities should have top priority.

120. During the past year further progress had been made towards the universality of the NPT. France and China had acceded to the Treaty and signed safeguards agreements with the Agency - developments of very great importance in view of the forthcoming NPT Review Conference. In that connection, Czechoslovakia had always held that the NPT should be extended indefinitely beyond 1995.

121. Similarly positive developments had taken place in the area of Agency safeguards. The conclusion of safeguards agreements with Argentina and Brazil was helping to strengthen security in Latin America, and the safeguards agreements concluded with the Syrian Arab Republic and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) were also very welcome. His delegation was pleased that inspection activities had begun in the DPRK. Although no significant or objective conclusions could be drawn after such a short period, the compliance of the DPRK with its safeguards agreement gave grounds for some optimism. As regards South Africa, its approach to the implementation of its safeguards agreement could be considered exemplary.

122. Pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions, the Agency had carried out inspections of Iraq's nuclear installations, with the resulting destruction of some of them. As the Director General had stressed, it was still too early to conclude that Iraq's military programmes no longer existed, and Czechoslovakia therefore believed that the Agency's inspection activities should continue. He took the opportunity to thank the Agency and its inspection teams.

123. Czechoslovakia welcomed the announcements by the Governments of Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan that they had decided to accede to the NPT, and it appealed to those States which had not yet acceded to the Treaty or not yet concluded their NPT safeguards agreements to do so speedily in order that the non-proliferation regime could become really universal.

124. During the time remaining before the next NPT Review Conference, measures should be taken to increase the effectiveness of the safeguards system. A number of proposals had been made by the Secretariat and by Member States, and discussions during recent meetings of the Board of Governors showed that the majority of Member States were in favour of strengthening safeguards even if there were still serious differences of opinion regarding some matters and the approach to be adopted. It was encouraging that the Board had confirmed the Agency's right to carry out special inspections when justified. Financing of the Agency's inspection activities should be the subject of further discussions.

125. On the question of safeguards financing, he said that not all possibilities for rationalization had yet been exhausted. Recalling the "selective safeguards inspections" proposal which his country had put forward at the thirty-second session of the General Conference, he said that at the current session his delegation was presenting a modified version with emphasis on differentiation between levels of inspection where necessary. His delegation was convinced that implementation of the proposal would bring significant savings without reducing the effectiveness or credibility of inspections. He welcomed the resumption of the activities of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and especially the measures taken during its last meeting, held in Warsaw.

community was pinning high hopes on the Agency and expected it to make further contributions to the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the prevention of nuclear proliferation.

135. An objective review of the Agency's work in the past year showed that commendable progress had been made on several important issues. In particular, the Symposium on Electricity and the Environment held in Helsinki and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had opened up new prospects for the development of nuclear power. The effective measures taken by the Secretariat to facilitate the implementation of technical assistance projects had further enhanced the Agency's capacity to respond to the ever-increasing demand for technical assistance. A number of suggestions and measures had been proposed by the Secretariat for the prevention of nuclear proliferation and the strengthening of safeguards in response to concerns expressed by various countries. The Agency had taken action to implement Security Council resolution 687. Finally, preliminary results had been obtained in identifying the elements of an international nuclear safety convention.

136. Although the results obtained were praiseworthy, however, there was no room for complacency; the Agency had still more to accomplish, and the Member States would have to facilitate the task by providing the necessary assistance. As everyone knew, since the latter half of the previous year the Agency had been experiencing unprecedented financial difficulties which prevented it from functioning normally. That situation could not but evoke the concern of Member States. So long as they attached importance to the work of the Agency and really did something to meet their financial obligations, the Agency would certainly be able to further improve and strengthen the performance of its functions.

137. In the light of the new situation, thought was being given to the future orientation of the Agency and how the Agency should ensure a balance between its promotional activities and its safeguards functions. Experience showed that so long as the Agency adhered to the objectives and principles of the Statute it continued to make progress, and that whenever too much emphasis was placed on a particular function there was a risk of its foundations being

weakened. Needless to say, every effort should be made to avoid such a situation. For that reason the Agency should maintain an appropriate balance between its safeguards functions and its promotional activities.

138. Peace and development were the two major issues facing the world today, and energy was a precondition for development. The use of fossil fuels could cause serious environmental problems such as the greenhouse effect and, unless appropriate measures were taken, those problems would become more acute as industrialization continued. In contrast, nuclear energy was environmentally friendly. In most countries, nuclear energy was economically competitive and at present by far the best alternative energy source. The Agency should therefore concentrate more of its attention on ways of satisfying the nuclear energy needs of its Member States. His delegation hoped that the Agency would make greater efforts to assist developing countries in nuclear power planning, the development of infrastructures for nuclear power facilities, the training of specialists and the dissemination of experience in nuclear power plant design, construction and operation. In addition, the Agency should encourage exchanges of experience among the developing countries themselves.

139. His Government, which had always attached importance and given high priority to co-operation in nuclear safety, believed that such co-operation would have an impact in the long term on the development of nuclear power and the protection of health and the environment. For a number of reasons, the developing countries lacked nuclear safety technology and experience. In order to bring their nuclear safety standards up to the international level, the Agency should do more in providing them with services and guidance, improving their management of radioactive waste and transferring advanced safety technology to them. His Government, which was paying great attention to the question of nuclear safety, had made safety and quality basic priorities in China's policy for the development of nuclear power.

140. China was an active participant in international co-operation in the safety field. The International Conference on the Safety of Nuclear Power held in September 1991 had provided an opportunity for an exchange of views and experience on the promotion of international co-operation in that field. At that conference, a number of proposals for strengthening such co-operation

had been put forward, including the formulation of an international nuclear safety convention - a proposal which had received a positive response from many Member States. Believing that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety lay with individual States, China, which was in favour of such a convention, proposed that it deal essentially with the basic principles of nuclear safety.

141. The sole objective of China's nuclear power programme was the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the benefit of the country's population. In December 1991 the 300 MW(e) pressurized water reactor at Qinshan, which had been both designed and constructed by Chinese enterprises, had been successfully commissioned and connected to the grid. The reactor, the first to go into operation in mainland China, opened a new chapter in the country's nuclear power development. Units 1 and 2 of the Daya Bay nuclear power station, jointly financed by China and Hong Kong, were to be commissioned in 1993 and 1994, respectively. The general and preliminary design work for Phase 2 of the Qinshan station (2 x 600 MW(e)) had been completed and preparatory site work was under way.

142. In its nuclear power programme China was relying mainly on its own experience, which it had gained over a period of 30 years. At the same time, China felt it important to make use of advanced overseas expertise and promote international co-operation. He was convinced that the growth of China's nuclear power industry would contribute to the socialist modernization of China and to the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy in the world at large.

143. The prevention of nuclear proliferation and the promotion of nuclear disarmament formed an important part of China's foreign policy. China had consistently upheld the principle of not encouraging or engaging in the proliferation of nuclear weapons; it did not help other countries to develop nuclear weapons. In its co-operation with other countries, China had always taken a responsible and prudent attitude. Regarding its nuclear exports, it required: that the importer give an assurance that the item in question was intended exclusively for peaceful purposes; that the item be subjected to Agency safeguards; and that there be no transfer of the item to a third party without China's consent. Regarding its nuclear imports, China undertook to ensure that the items in question would be used solely for peaceful purposes.

144. Under the voluntary-offer safeguards agreement concluded by the Chinese Government and the Agency in September 1988, Agency inspectors had conducted their first inspection in China from 14 to 19 September 1992. In January 1989, China had acceded to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, thereby demonstrating that it attached great importance to the issue of physical protection of nuclear material and that it was willing to participate in international co-operation in that field. To facilitate the Agency's safeguards activities, China had in November 1991 officially undertaken to notify on a continuous basis its nuclear material exports to and imports from non-nuclear-weapon States whenever the quantity exceeded one effective kilogram. In March 1992, China had formally acceded to the NPT.

145. China was in favour of discussions within the Agency on measures to strengthen nuclear safeguards and supported in principle the conducting of special inspections. At the same time, it believed that the right to conduct special inspections should not be abused. From what he had said it was clear that China fully supported the objective of nuclear non-proliferation and would continue to work unremittingly towards that objective.

146. Although discussions within the Agency on the strengthening of the safeguards system had made further headway, the legitimate aspirations of the developing countries for more extensive and in-depth international co-operation in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy had yet to be accorded the attention they deserved and the significance and role of international co-operation in that field were often deliberately distorted or understated. The monopoly of the industrialized countries in nuclear science and technology remained essentially intact. Some of those countries had gone so far as to impose unreasonable restrictions on international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear trade under the pretext of the prevention of nuclear proliferation. In recent years in particular, there had been attempts to hamper co-operation among developing countries in that field. All those factors were detrimental to the advancement of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

147. His delegation felt it necessary to reiterate that the countries concerned should take appropriate measures to prevent international co-operation from contributing to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, including nuclear explosive devices, but that such preventive measures should not hinder or restrict the promotion of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy nor jeopardize the legitimate right of any country, particularly a developing country, to utilize nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

148. China had consistently attached importance to the dual role of the Agency in the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation and had always adhered to and upheld the objectives and principles of the Statute. Over the past year, as in previous years, China had taken an active part in the work of the Agency and had made efforts to help promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It had paid its assessed contribution to the Regular Budget in time, had fulfilled its financial obligations regarding technical assistance and co-operation and had done its best in providing contributions in kind.

149. China had actively participated in consultations and discussions on the strengthening of safeguards and had put forward constructive suggestions and observations. In the field of technical co-operation, Chinese authorities had sponsored, either with their own resources or in co-operation with the Agency, nine regional training courses or international conferences held in China. The 8th International Meeting on Irradiation Processing, recently held in Beijing, had reviewed the latest progress made and had permitted an exchange of information on the industrial application of irradiation processing techniques. He hoped that the results of that meeting would help promote the commercialization of those techniques.

150. Together with other interested countries, China had actively promoted multi-level and multi-form co-operation with other developing countries, especially regional co-operation in Asia and the Pacific, and had endeavoured to intensify that co-operation. Over the past year, numerous Chinese experts

had been invited to attend meetings of various Agency advisory or expert groups. At the same time, China had provided training and expert services for other developing countries.

151. In the light of the volatile international situation, Member States expected the Agency to continue playing a positive role in the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the prevention of nuclear proliferation. China believed that, provided all Member States adhered to the objectives and principles of the Statute and followed the current overwhelming trend in favour of peace and development in the world, the Agency would be able to fulfil all expectations and accomplish the historic tasks with which it was entrusted.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

